DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 215 480 EC 142 139

AUTHOR Cataldo, Christine, Ed.
TITLE The Early Years: Focus on the Young Child and Family.
INSTITUTION Council for Exceptional Children, Buffalo. New York State Federation of Chapters.
PUB DATE 81
NOTE 33p.
AVAILABLE FROM The Forum, 582 Baldy Hall, SUNY/Buffalo, Amherst, NY 14260 (no price quoted).
JOURNAL CIT Forum; v7 n2 Sum 1981

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Child Development; Curriculum; Day Care; *Disabilities; Educational Diagnosis; *Family Influence; Infants; Kindergarten; Language Acquisition; *Parent Role; Preschool Education; Prevention; Severe Disabilities; Special Education; *Young Children

ABSTRACT

Fourteen brief articles focus on the young handicapped child and his family. Articles have the following titles and authors: "Elements of Early Care and Education" (W. Fowler); "Mothers and Fathers--The Special Child's Special Resources" (M. Lamb); "Child Development--Knowledge and the Special Educator" (A. Honig); "The Handicapped Child in the Preschool Setting--The Immigrants vs. the Natural Model" (A. Kozen, S. Zippiroli); "Language Errors Aren't Just Mistakes--They're Puzzles for Us to Solve" (J. Duchan); "Infancy--A Special Beginning" (L. Geismar, C. Cataldo); "Curricular Planning Issues in the Education of the Young Severely Handicapped" (D. Pomerantz, K. Gradel); "Prevention of Problems in Children--The 'Executive Function' of the Family" (M. Rappaport); "Curriculum for the Very Young, Have We Forgotten Something?" (J. Sparling); "Kindergarten Issues with Implications for Special Education" (R. Salzer); "Day Care and the Exceptional Child" (A. Potenza); "Some Perspectives on Assessment in Early Childhood" (J. Bondurant); "The Young Child in Action--A Photo Essay" (The Cantalician Center for Learning and SUNY at Buffalo); and "A Bibliography--An Early Childhood" (C. Cataldo). (DB)

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ED215480

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A Publication of The New York State Federation of ... ial Children

VOLUME 7, NO. 2 SUMMER 1981

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ISSUE TOPIC: THE EARLY YEARS: FOCUS ON THE YOUNG CHILD AND FAMILY

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EC142139

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VIEWPOINT

The Early Years: Focus On The Young Child and Family

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In this issue of *The Forum* the focus is on the young child and family. Articles come from researchers and educators in several disciplines, including special education, child development and early childhood programming. They have in common a commitment to the developing infant and preschool child within educational and family settings.

Recent Trends

Cooperative activities between professionals in handicapped programs and those in early education or family development have been growing. These interdisciplinary affiliations appear to be effective in shaping model programs and clarifying some educational issues. One important consequence of this shared expertise may be that valuable philosophical and practical guidelines from early childhood education are integrated into preschool special education. This may be particularly appropriate in areas such as the design of the physical setting, content of the curriculum, and program attention to children's affective and social development—traditionally the hallmark of quality pre-schools.

Another trend, that of family support and parent education, has become an especially significant component of early intervention programs for the very young. Professionals in counseling and human development are able to provide the supervisor and teacher with appropriate guidelines for parent learning and classroom involvement. A third possible result of partnerships across several fields is the increase in preventive and remedial infant programming in the fields of education, nursing, social services and daycare. Frequently the professionals in these programs for our youngest learners are able to lend to one another notions about appropriate handling and physical care, screening and assessment, curriculum and the role of parents.

Special education has, in turn, contributed some strategies to the early childhood and child care fields. Individualized curriculum planning and specificity in goal setting and evaluation may be used effectively for selected children attending early education programs. A broader concept of special need within a typical setting also appears to be emerging in these fields. The presence of children with physical handicaps and developmental and learning problems may soon be viewed as an integral and valued feature of the preschool.

In This Issue

The sharing and communication apparent in these trends is a healthy sign. If effective and humanistic programming for the young child and family

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Elements of Early Care and Education

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What constitutes a good program for early care and education? Let us survey a few of these early developmental tasks, updating our knowledge of the skills needed and discussing the activities and methods that the best practices employ to develop these skills in young children.

Early Childhood Competencies

The competencies to be learned during the early childhood are relatively familiar to early education, day care and special education professionals. First is elementary knowledge of the physical and social worlds and of the relationship of the self to them. Second is mastery of language and readiness skills for school learning—reading, writing and calculating. Third are the strategies for coping, solving problems and working creatively in elemental ways. Fourth are perceptual motor skills in use of the body and its appendages. And five is aesthetics, beginning knowledge and skills in the arts—visual, musical and dance. Underlying them all is of course the framework of the emotions, values and motivations, which are built into the way in which children are engaged in learning of all kinds, determining how they feel about themselves and others and what they like and dislike and care about accomplishing.

Play and Care

While there are many paths to acquiring these competencies, life in children's programs centers around certain forms of activity that lend themselves to including different combinations of learning. Predominant among these are the basic care routines, the rituals of eating, dressing, toileting, bathing and the like. Equal in importance are the child's experimentations in play. The activities in which caregivers and teachers engage children in learning for its own sake, whether formally or informally, individually or in small groups, probably constitutes the most widely varying aspect of early education programs, both in form and frequency. Excursions of one kind or another are valuable activities that also find an important place in some programs. The problem in group programs for the young is to find the right mix for each set of activities to bring about the learning each type of child handles best. There is, however, a general strategy for working with young children that is most productive for development and learning.

Adult Strategies

Once again the important elements of this strategy are familiar to some degree, even though we may find them difficult to carry out in practice. The most general element is the principle of interaction. The building of relationships in which both the child and the adult freely initiate and respond in the course of an activity. This kind of free and easy interchange, when carried out at its best, engages the child and the adult in both cognitive transactions (exchanges of information) and interpersonal relations (a give and take of feelings about each other and the task). The interest and warmth of both parties fire up the learning and task accomplishment in a kind of joint inquiry and enterprise. In this manner the child's autonomy and skills, in cooperating, so necessary for coping in the social world, as well as the cognitive skills themselves, become most firmly established.

The second element is to interact in the child's own modes, which for the early ages means predominantly in manipulative and social play with materials and tasks, not simply through verbal discourse or tasks as mere chores. Yet a rich use of language—when clearly tied to the objects and actions of the activity—is a most essential third element of most interactions if the child's mastery of language is to be thorough and rapid. A fourth element is to engage the child rationally, that is, to treat the child as a growing person capable of learning and understanding, not simply as a creature to be cuddled or controlled. The play of the child, though fanciful, is nonetheless bound to the logic of the way things work. And, to treat the child rationally introduces the principle of matching concepts and expectations for performing in care routines to the child's level of understanding.

Learning Media

Thus equipped with principles, what can we expect children to learn in the different types of activities common to the care of young children? Each type serves certain forms of learning best. Guiding learning of almost any kind, but is most useful for helping children learn complicated concepts, where graduated sequences and many components are involved, such as science projects or a series on number concepts. Play is the medium for children to experiment with materials to grasp better physical and social concepts on their own, a process that is greatly enriched by the variety of experiences children encounter elsewhere, particularly through books and cognitive stimulation by adults. Excursions are a valuable ingredient to expand the child's mind in this way. The routines of care offer unlimited, too often neglected possibilities. Competence in personal care, language, music, social tasks and affectionate adult-child interaction are features of routine care with young children. The intimacy of these daily rituals, including physical contact, are indeed models of experience that will shape the child's feelings and expectations about her or his future human relations for better or for worse.

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Mothers and Fathers: The Special Child's Special Resources

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During the last decade, there has been a major change in the ways in which professionals conceptualize and implement intervention programs for dependent children. These changes are most graphically and widely evident in the evolution of the Head Start Program since its introduction in 1965, but they have also characterized the design of intervention programs aimed at handicapped or special children.

The Family and the Program

In the past intervention programs were explicitly focused on the designated recipients of needed services—the children. Program innovations involved changes in the curricula and pedagogical approach as well as a significant shift toward a focus on "the whole child" which brought about an increased concern with the social and emotional needs of those who were perceptually and/or cognitively handicapped. Conspicuously lacking, however, was an appreciation of the child's development in the context of family relationships, strengths, and needs.

Years of disappointing experience led to widespread dissatisfaction with this approach. First of all, it became clear that it was not children alone who had special needs—families too needed support and attention if they were to cope, let alone thrive. Second. it was clear that even the most intensive of educational programs were of limited value if they were not supplemented by the efforts of those persons (family members) who were responsible for the child's care, stimulation, and informal education most of the time. As a result, most interventions today, particularly those that appear to be successful, are focused on families rather than simply on children.

Parents in Programs

This shift in focus does not represent a change in goals so much as a change in the means employed toward a desired end. Since parents have more emotional commitment to and investment in their children than teachers can ever have, they obviously have a major impact on their children's development. Efforts have thus been made to provide parents with the resources and support needed to cope with the stresses and burdens that are inevitably associated with attempts to raise exceptional children. In addition, an increasing number of programs now attempt to integrate parents into the explicity pedagogical aspects of the intervention. These efforts serve two purposes. First, the self-esteem and perceived effectance of parents is enhanced when program personnel acknowledge the parents' importance.

This enhanced self-respect should in turn facilitate parental competence. Second, these efforts signify that parents are explicitly recognized as primary contributors to the child's education. Even when special children are in full-day programs, they spend at least twice as many hours with their parents as with their teacners. Consequently, it is important that the interactions which fill the hours at home supplement the lessons communicated by teachers and professionals. Programs vary in the extent to which they emphasize formal and informal learning within the home, but all recognize the benefits that accrue when parents are kept abreast of the goals being set for their children's developmental progress. Informed and involved parents know what tasks will be enjoyable and enriching rather than frustrating and boring for their children. These "tasks" or activities need not be explicitly educational in nature; children learn also from everyday events like shopping, cooking, reading and being read to, chatting and simply observing objects, people and events around them.

Parents also come to understand more about the learning process. All children *can* learn, no matter how mentally handicapped they may be. Whether or not they actually *do* learn depends on whether the learning experiences to which they are exposed are appropriately suited to the children's existing capacities. Tasks that demand less than the children's capacities and those that make demands far exceeding anything of which the children are capable are similarly fated to be without benefit. However, the tasks which pose attainable challenges foster developmental progress and parents can learn this through the program. Equally important, informed parents who tailor their demands to suit their children's capacities are more likely to find interaction enjoyable and rewarding for themselves. In general, a happy and fulfilled parent is likely to be a better parent.

Father Involvement

Interestingly, an increasing number of programs are recognizing that the benefits attributable to the involvement of parents are maximized when both mothers and fathers are involved. This too represents a change in traditional thinking. Only within the last decade have researchers, theorists, and practitioners come to recognize that fathers make important contributions to their children's development. Like mothers, fathers affect their children's development directly by providing stimulation, love, and guidance as well as by serving as models of competent, socially-approved behavior. This is true whether or not the children are handicapped, emotionally-disturbed, etc. In addition, fathers affect their children's

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Child Development: Knowledge and the Special Educator

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Curricula for special educators often focus attention on and develop expertise related to the special needs of the children served. But, additionally, knowledge about normal child development can illuminate and vitalize work with handicapped youngsters. Certain developmental principles are important for all children, not just for normally developing children. Three of these ideas are especially important to consider in early childhood school and childcare programs.

Interesting Activities

All children need activities and experiences that are interesting, that excite their curiosity and their explorations. Such experiences motivate a child to learn about the world of objects and people.

Sometimes caregivers and teachers overly solicitous of a handicapping condition may detract from a child's motivation to try new activities. For example, language-delayed children need chances or opportunities that nudge them into asking, rather than just pointing for more juice, or cookies or any desired food. Teacher enthusiasm for even initial word sounds should enhance the prospects for more such verbal attempts. Blind or motorically-delayed toddlers into whose hands toys are habitually placed may have little motivation to reach or stretch or crawl for a nearby toy.

Caregivers also need to lure children into active environmental encounters. A toy can be squeaked or jingled nearby. A mobile that gives auditory feedback when positioned over a blind baby's feet is sure to elicit vigorous kicks to keep the sound coming once an inadvertent limb thrust sets the mobile in motion. Such arrangements build on the internal motivation that Piaget has identified as the child's own force that impels early learning. Eductors need to harness this internal curiosity and drive to learn.

Match-making

Good matchmaking skills promote the process of learning for children at all levels of development. Teachers need to set individual goals for children that reflect present competencies and abilities but that challenge and stretch those current abilities just a bit at a time. Perceptive match-making by the teacher is reflected in the child's willingness to work hard for mastery of a slightly new and interesting task or game. Good match-making is a teaching skill that we continue to learn throughout our careers. Good matchmakers increase the chances that children's interest in struggling with therapeutically planned activities will be greater than their feelings of frustration or discouragement with new learnings.

A variety of teaching techniques can be listed to help the slow-learning child. Some special children will need strong teacher attempts to focus their attention. Some will need patient and frequent modeling of new action patterns and perhaps molding of the child's hands as in teaching new signs of deaf or autisitic youngters. All the teacher's ingenuity should be directed to mobilize the child's own inner drive to grow, to explore, to learn.

Physical Affection

Young children need a foundation of confidence, and trust in their caregivers to provide a loving and secure base for early learning. Caregivers of handicapped infants need to know that babies need lots of cuddling and affectionate body contact. Some caregivers may show excessive anxiety about a handicap through their gingerly handling and gestures. Physical handicaps should not signal that a baby is too fragile for holding and cuddling. Healthy emotional development depends upon the feeling that one's needs for loving are well nourished.

Self- confidence and social competence grow not only from specific tasks that are performed but from how young children are treated by adults and peers while performing tasks. For example, if a special educator has to carry out a therapeutic exercise with a child, *how* the adult expresses caring and encourages delight in their activity together makes a real difference to the child's emotional well-being. Of course special skill training can best be carried out in the larger context of meeting individual children's needs for environmental and interpersonal encounters that are rewarding.

Summary

Thus, activities designed to strengthen locomotion and learning skills in the early years can often be set in the context of an interesting game matched to the child's learning needs and carried out with affection. The goal of the game then furthers the growth of learning as the child bangs, waves, tastes, examines and "works" the toy. Skill remediation needs to be carried out with these child development goals in mind so that each special education experience is a learning experience that contributes to the whole child.

The Handicapped Child in the Preschool Setting: The Immigrant Vs. The Natural Citizen Model

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Since the enactment of P.L. 94-142, there has been an intense effort and widespread emphasis on the "mainstreaming" of handicapped children into classrooms traditionally geared for educating normal functioning boys and girls. In accordance with definitions of the procedures and strategies that are presently used, most school systems move a handicapped child into an already defined normal group setting. The factors which determine when and to what extent the movement will take place are usually based upon his/her cognitive abilities and, more seldom, this move may be based upon his/her social and/or emotional needs. In other words, decisions are contingent upon academic competition.

The Immigrant Model

What does the handicapped child face when entering into the "mainstream?" The physical space she occupies in the normal classroom, by virtue of an esprit de corps, has already been territorialized by her non-handicapped peers. This child, who only spends a minimal portion of her day in the mainstreamed setting, has invaded the personal space of the classroom. Not only is she forced to compete academically but interpersonally as well.

Academic, territorial, and social competition are all threatening to the child whose needs have already been met through small class size, individualized instruction and close teacher-pupil interaction. The weakness of the "mainstream" design is the concept of least restrictive environment. In this context the handicapped child is an outsider who may never be totally assimilated into the psychodynamics of the group. Therefore, by its very nature the least restrictive environment sets up restrictions within itself. It can be compared to what we will call an "Immigrant Model".

Historically, any newcomer who moved into an already established culture experienced isolation and segregation. He was neglected and/or scorned by the assimilating populations. Finally, he was forced to accept and abide by already existing mores which were foreign to him. He had no way, nor was given any opportunity, to be a contributor. When a handicapped child moves into a regular classroom, he has stepped into the Immigrant Model. He is entering into an already defined subculture and must suffer all of the pains that immigration creates.

The Natural Citizen Model

Since preschool education is a downward extension of the elementary school, our concern is that the present state of the art not serve as an exemplary system to program planners in their decision-making policies. If mainstreaming offers the least restrictive environment and all of the rights and privileges that go along with it, we would like to offer something else.

The term that best suits the normalizing efforts which *should* occur at the preschool level is "integration." By this is meant a total effort to involve handicapped and non-handicapped young children in one setting which is responsive and responsible to the unique child and group needs with children remaining in as close contact with one another as possible. This we call the "Natural Citizen Model".

From the beginning, each child enters into a total shared setting. No child is denied participation in the physical space. Everyone can experience territorialism positively. The handicapped child is not an intruder but rather part owner of the classroom.

In an integrated setting any grouping combination is possible. Sometimes groups may be composed of both handicapped and non-handicapped. At other times a single member may compose the group. Instruction, consistent with the ideal of integration, attends to the needs of the individual regardless of the grouping.

Peer relationships are a foremost goal in early childhood programs. They can promote either constructive or non-constructive interaction. Feelings such as liking, belonging, accepting, sharing, and empathizing are normal developments of positive peer relationships. Be advised, there is little empirical evidence to support or refute the notion that simply placing handicapped and non-handicapped children in the same physical setting will guarantee positive peer relationships and constructive social interaction as is assumed in the "mainstream" philosophy. The integrated setting is the matrix out of which constructive peer influences, among other things, may enfold.

The inhibitions intrinsic to the "Immigrant Model" are absent in the integrated setting. All students are natural citizens. The conception of schooling as part of the "Natural Citizen" model is that

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Language Errors Aren't Just Mistakes— They're Puzzles For Us To Solve

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Children's language and communication skills are especially important in the early years. As adults work with children to help them develop better language they need to understand this important inroad to the child's thoughts and feelings. Problems, for example, can tell us something about the child.

Language Puzzles

Children's speech and language differences should be regarded as puzzles to be solved rather than simply errors to be corrected. The puzzle has to do with the fact that their differences come from their sense of the world, not just their lack of adult knowledge. We can discover that sense of the world by listening to them as if we were listening to someone from another culture. Once we, as listeners, attend closely to children, tune in to their language, we can then consider ways to make them more like us. We can also be more effective in that attempt. To do this we need to figure out what they mean by what they say and why they say it in the way they do. Some examples may help to illustrate the point.

Echolalia

Autistic childen's speech is characterized by echolalia, a repetition of parts of what they have just heard. Traditionally the echoes have been seen as inappropriate, and parents, teachers and language pathologists have worked hard to eliminate it. Recent research has shown that echoes of echolalic children are not all the same, but a particular child may have echoes which differ in features such as loudness, tempo, interactive accompaniments, and concomitant actions. Furthermore, these differences are consistent enough to allow one to discover that they express different meanings with those feature differences. For example, quick echoes of a segment of a question beginning with "do you want. . ." means "Yes" for many echolalic children. The echoes thereby serve an important function which goes unexpressed when the echoes are eliminated.

Mispronounciations

Children's mispronounciation of words are not simply error productions of particular sounds. Rather, they have been found to be systematic and a reflection of the fact that children think about sounds as groups or types. The children may, for example, substitute stop sounds (p,t,b,d) for their fricative counterparts (f,s,v,z): or they may think that words are made up only of beginning consonants followed by a vowel: or they may substitute one sound for all consonants in the middle of words. The children are working according to elaborate linguistic rules, albeit different from ours.

Word Omissions

Children typically omit words from their sentences. These omissions have been labelled telegraphic and regarded as wrong. But they, too, are systematic in a way that can be analyzed. For example, the omissions are likely to occur for particular parts of speech such as auxiliaries, prepositions, or articles. They may be words whose meaning is not crucial for conveying the essence of the message. Some authorities have attributed the problem to memory. In this case the children can't remember all the words, so they cleverly pick the ones that are going to get the message across.

Summary

Allowing children the legitimacy of their so called "errors" has several beneficial results. It leads us to treating them as thinking beings rather than incorrect responders, creating a more human interaction. It places the burden on us to understand the reasons behind their differences, rather than on them to make themselves like us. It gives us a better sense of what they are intending to say and mean, making their attempts more successful and our interactions with them more productive. It gives us insight into how to help them progress from where they are as children to where we are as adults who understand and produce language well. And making sense of children's speech and language errors is a process that contains all the fun, satisfaction and creativity of solving a complicated puzzle.

Infancy: A Special Beginning

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Programs for infants and their parents have been developing during the last decade, often in the hope that very early attention to growth and learning will increase a child's chances for achieving his or her maximum potential within whatever limits are created by physical and social conditions.

Programs For the Very Young

Infant and toddler programs differ from one another in several respects. Service delivery, for example, may be based in a center, institution or home. The focus may be child-centered, parent-centered or a mixture of each. The child population may consist of developmentally delayed or handicapped infants and their parents, high risk babies or typical children attending a group care progam for all or a portion of their day. Regardless of the specific model with its particular mandated goals and strategies, enhancing the development of infants and toddlers appears to be the overriding purpose when a program is educational in nature. Prevention of later, more complex problems is often assumed to be a result of early attention to minor difficulties. Helping the baby to achieve skills and behaviors when age-appropriate usually constitutes a developmental emphasis.

Programs are similar in many of their logistical and instructional elements. The roles of adults, equipment and activities are typically described against a backdrop of caregiving routines and work/play times. The personal and immediate needs of babies dictate how adults behave toward them. Handicapping conditions and special needs influence the nature and scope of some of the activities of teachers and parents.

The Curriculum Model

Educational models for children under three differ not only in delivery style and population but also in how the process of providing treatment or obtaining developmental gain is to be implemented. One approach to programming, used frequently for babies with special needs, is the infant curriculum model. A set of planned activities based on a predetermined sequence of skill acquisition is applied to individual babies. Norms of development in all areas (motor, mental, linguistic, social) are used to mark the child's status. From an assessment battery the infant or toddler's specific strengths and weaknesses are identified. Sometimes predicted problems are included when a medical diagnosis is used. Curriculum activities are then borrowed or devised that focus upon increasing the child's ability to perform that developmental milestone. It is assumed that this focus upon specific objectives and activities and their link with typical developmental progressions can serve as an appropriate and efficient means of remediating some problems and preventing others.

The Group Care Model

Another model for infancy is that used in the group care of typical babies. This approach could be described as one of guided self-discovery and play in which the infant or toddler interacts with an environment of adults, peers and objects at an independent pace based on interest and need. Teachers may vary in how much they attempt to order and control the child's gains in skills and abilities but the child is thought to play a central role in learning within a relatively open setting. Significant developmental milestones and changes in personal and social growth occur as the child participates in daily experiences. Motivation for learning comes from adults and the physical environment. There is, in a sense, a great deal of latitude for child-directed goals and activities. Because the children are developing adequately, differences between them can be considered as uniquenesses rather than delays or problems. For children with minor delays or vague signs, this approach provides a less restricted but more incidental learning environment.

The Parent-Infant Model

A third approach to infant education relies upon parent/family learning that is expected to generalize to the child. Often the infant and parent attend a program together. Activiites, handling techniques and information are conveyed by demonstration, consultation and group meetings. In this approach parents serve as home teachers and supporters of their infants. It is assumed that parents will be able to translate what they learn and that family culture and values will permit acceptance or interpretation of information in a way that allows its adoption and integration. Specific facts, resources, general attitudes, and counseling are often components of the program curriculum. The infant or toddler gains skills and abilities indirectly but it is anticipated that the learning is more frequent and meaningful by virtue of its integration into the daily family situation.

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Curricular Planning Issues in the Education of the Young Severly Handicapped

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A developmental perspective on human behavior undergirds most current educational practices. Since certain behavior patterns are exhibited before others with great regularity, it is reasonable for teachers to use these developmental sequences as guides for the assessment and teaching of young children. In the case of severely handicapped children, however, the developmental perspective has been a mixed blessing. It must be integrated with a functional curricular approach in order to facilitate the most sensible early childhood programming.

Checklists and Developmental Progress

A visible product of the developmental perspective is the scale, or checklist, of developmental milestones. Whether or not the scales have a particular theoretical basis or not, they all list skills or behaviors which are typical of young children. It must be emphasized that the behaviors included in the checklists are not necessarily critical for developmental progress. In fact, many of the specific tasks are selected because they are easily observed and reliably measured, not because they are inherently useful or applicable in the child's school or home environment.

Consider the following example. Building a three-block tower is a developmental milestone included on several scales. Tower building is, of course, not an essential skill for a young child in the present. It will not significantly contribute to his adult competence when he has to care for himself, participate in recreational activities, or work. Tower building, however, has appeared in countless instructional objectives for severely handicapped preschoolers, probably because learning the skill will help a child progress on tasks measured by developmental checklists. It may be a reasonable activity to assess if the actual goal is to teach certain social behaviors. But does it really promote cognitive and fine-motor gains which are necessary for learning more difficult but relevant skills? There is little or no evidence that it does. Perhaps the teacher would do better to work on fine-motor and cognitive skills within tasks that promote mastery of current environments and have longitudinal utility. Such skills as holding cups, using spoons, and zippering jackets might serve the child better.

A Functional Approach

Severely handicapped students do not learn easily. Even when instruction is precise and well designed, progress can be slow. Thus, they will not master all behaviors typical of the developing child. It is unfortunate when valuable teaching time is spent on behaviors which do not contribute directly to competence. Many severely handicapped adolescents and adults have virtually no age-appropriate, relevant skills because their entire school program focused on non-functional skills which were considered to be "pre-requisite" (Brown, Branston, Hamre-Nietupski, Pumpian, Certo, & Gruenewald, 1979). The challenge to early childhood special educators is to not let that happen to another generation of students.

It is no simple matter to develop a functional curriculum for handicapped infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. We cannot analyze a specific employment opportunity or residential environment, as we do with adolescents, in order to determine critical skill requirements. Future living arrangements are too far off to predict specific skill needs. We can, however, continuously question why objectives have been selected and whether there are alternative objectives which have more impact on current environments and more potential impact on adult competence.

Fortunately, developmental scales need not be discarded entirely as a source of curricular planning. Many milestones can be adapted into reasonable, functional goals. Consider the milestone of "following one-step commands." Can it be justified in a functional curriculum? Indeed, children are asked to do things at school (e.g., "get your jacket") and at home (e.g.' "Come to the table for breakfast"). Certainly, following directions will contribute to an individual's future ability to recreate (e.g., ("Tickets please") and to work (e.g., "Did you punch in?"). Thus, the content of this milestone holds up well to scrutiny and poses no problem.

The instructional process (i.e., methods, materials) also must be considered in order to build a functional curriculum for young severely handicapped students. A typical form taken for teaching how to follow directions is portrayed by the following example:

"Jenny, touch your toes."—"Good!"

"Now Jenny, put the hat under the chair."—"That's right."

Although some elements in the sequence may be supported, we have to question the basic rationale for the lesson as a whole. Jenny cannot be expected to generalize learning to follow these artificial instructions to naturally occurring instructions at school and home. Despite the functionality of the objective,

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Prevention of Problems in Children: The "Executive Function" of the Family

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Whether we are discussing developmental problems in very young children, or lack of motivation in school-age children, the family situation often comes under review. This trend, no doubt, is due to the increasing number of studies which confirm that the structure, communication patterns, values and social position of the family have a crucial impact on children.

Families and Society

Most families don't know what to think about the problems they may be having with their children. They may not distinguish between "normal" developmental stresses and strains and "real" physical, psychological behavioral and situational difficulties. They may not understand special needs or treatments. As family members they are geared to care maintenance and picking up pieces when things go wrong, rather than getting educated to manage family life better. Although families do their best to nurture children without adequate knowledge, resources, committment and skills, they are often greatly strained and children fail to thrive.

Studies of family stress and recent notions of the family and its impact on the development of children affirm that the family as we know it today is not the family other generations knew. We confront problems that are clearly special to our own time. These new problems, in turn, create the need for families to function in new ways, to do more than work or love together. They must face change and adapt together. Yet, what is often felt is a sense that the family is no longer pulling together in the old ways, is no longer being supported by the institutions around it. Rather, other social institutions are requiring more from families.

Many families manage to relate to the present turmoil in a creative way. Indeed, in many circles the family is viewed as rich in the potential for the strength that supports child growth and development. Rather than allow fragmentation to be the result of the internal family pressure, or external complexity, they work to evolve new, and perhaps more mutually satisfying ways of relating. Changes in family roles in light of the competitive demands of a pluralistic society is one example of this evolution. Another is increased recognition of the need for planning within the family unit in order to be more adaptive to the variety of experiences available to people in a dynamic society. Better communcation among family members and understanding of the potential of the family as a social grouping point the way to a more enriched family life. People are gaining by the recognition that in all realms of family life there are more choices available. Possibilities and options open avenues to personal and mutual enrichment. If we know what our options are, if we can think intelligently about our expectations; if we know our limits and when we must turn outside for advice, we need not feel threatened by the context in which the family exists.

The Executive Function

This new societal context requires that the nurturing functon of the family be extended. It gives rise to what I have termed the *executive* function of the family. A good business executive may be presumed to have certain qualities; certain knowledges and skills. These qualities of *consistency, compromise, goal-directedness, flexibility,* and *succession planning* are useful for families who are charged with creating productive environments for children.

For example, when family life is consistent it has a stabilizing influence on children's development. When parents are compromising and flexible they balance their adult needs with the needs of children. Goal-directed parents work for a physically and psychologically healthy family. They are prevention-minded in every situation. When parents recognize that in child-rearing they are training successors, then they teach that parenting is the most important job to be undertaken in life.

New Responsibilities

The executive function of the family creates new responsibilities for parents. The concepts of management and prevention become important guidelines to action. Some responsibilities for families acting as executives in preventing problems in children can be suggested. First, families need to promote the primacy and importance of the family unit (as varied as that might be in the future). Current realities in our society must be acknowledged and accepted. Through education, the patterns of social change can be grasped and appropriate intervention can be attempted. Families need to work for new mechanisms of communication about family life and family developmental cycles. They should promote discussion about the dynamic and evolutionary character of the family

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Curriculum For The Very Young, Have We Forgotten Something?

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A young handicapped child can become, in the teacher's mind and even in the parent's mind, so identified with specific problem that it is difficult to maintain the broader view of that child's humanity. But kids are kids first—and handicapped second. True, most special children need a special and tailored curriculum. But isn't there need for a general curriculum as well?

Educational Goals

The special teacher might do well to take a second look at some of the general early childhood education books and at the various general infant curriculums that are available. None of the these would provide a fully adequate approach for most handicapped children, yet such "general" resources may make a humanizing contribution to the educational experience of young handicapped children. Even while teachers are planning remedial activities in the area of the child's special deficit, a general program can remind them at the same time to encourage the child to sample from all experiences open to him or her:

- —to feel deeply and to develop a strong self image
- —to be challenged by the need to share and cooperate
- —to test her independence
- —to understand and express ideas through language
- —to exercise intellect and skills and creativity in problem solving
- —to know his body in space and action.

Of course, real limits exist for the young handicapped person. But the teacher's challenge is to open up the widest vista of enjoyment and learning that is possible.

Social Development and Curriculum

If the special teacher is to use a general curriculum resource to enrich and humanize the more specific and deficit-focused part of her curriculum, what should she look for? Probably, she will feel some lack in the first three items in the list above. These three together comprise *social development*—typically, the most under-supplied curriculum area. What are some examples of early educational activities that might be included in these three social aspects of a general curriculum?

Feelings and Self Image

In the first area of feelings and self image, a very early activity might have the goal of clearly revealing *your* feelings to the child. For example, with an infant you might lift the child over your head (assuming no medical reasons not to) while maintaining eye contact and enthusiastically expressing excitement with an animated sentence like "Up you go!" Your expression of excitement would be geared to match the child's exhilaration and to tell him that his feeling is an okay and satisfying feeling to have and express. That upward trip can be followed by an exciting elevator ride down, ending in a warmly secure cuddle against your body: "Down you come, safe and sound!" Of course this activity includes more than its social goals. For example, we are using important language, including the concept of up and down. But the well-expressed mutual experience of excitement within a secure social context is the major curriculum goal in this instance and deserves attention in its own right.

In the second area, sharing and cooperation, we might plan an activity which could be done better by two people than one. Children with some control over their arms and trunk can be encouraged to hold opposite ends of a large bath towel or small blanket. A large rubber ball placed on this towel can provide an interesting time as the children try to keep the ball from falling off, or as they raise first one end of the blanket and then the other to make the ball move back and forth. If the adult labels what they are doing and comments about the fact that two people are making this happen, additional meaning and social emphasis is brought to this activity.

Independence

The last social area is independence. It represents the flip side of cooperation and dependence. Many sensory-motor or cognitive activities can be slightly reorganized to help the young child gain some sense of her own level of independence. Of course, very young children or children with handicaps must necessarily be very dependent, so it is easy for us who act as caregivers and teachers to miss some of the very small opportunities for steps in independence. Every activity, even an experience in painting or in using manipulative materials, might be examined to see if it contains any modest choices that children could make. Going and getting their materials from a place that has been chosen for its convenient height or accessible location is a small but worthwhile step in independence. If the child cannot go to the materials,

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Kindergarten Issues With Implications for Special Education

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A period of substantial change with regard to the kindergarten appears to be occurring. The assumptions of an earlier time—that the kindergarten was essentially child-oriented, that the emphasis was on experiential learning and play-like activities, that the teacher did little formal instruction, and that the schedule was a half-day format—are all being questioned. Alternative approaches to content, organization and scheduling have appeared in a large number of schools.

Many teachers, administrators and parents decry this trend, and those with responsibility for the placement of children with special needs may be particularly concerned that the kindergarten is being transformed into another year of regular school where the youngster who needs much consideration will not be particularly welcome.

Forces within the general society and the educational system combine to bring about some of these changes in the kindergarten

Social Influences

1. Large numbers of children now attend group programs prior to kindergarten, up to 80 or 90 per cent in some elementary buildings. The notion of the kindergarten year as a necessary time of transition between the home and the outside world is invalid in such circumstances.
2. Working parents often prefer an all-day kindergarten, for their own convenience or the welfare of the children.
3. Even when a parent is at home, few others are. There are fewer siblings and neighborhood playmates with whom to associate if you are in a half-day kindergarten. Some parents thereby conclude that their child would be better off at school all day.

Educational Influences

1. When large numbers of children are attending Head Start classes, nursery schools, or day care centers, they will be learning routines and appropriate group behavior. This leads some observers to conclude that such goals can be deemphasized in kindergarten.
2. In these preschool settings children will be engaged in self-selection of such activities as painting, building with blocks, working puzzles, and participating in creative and dramatic play. With this sort of experience, they are, it is argued, ready and even eager for more teacher-directed learning when they reach kindergarten.
3. Pressures within the school system or greater attention to measurable academic performance affect the kindergarten in a direct way. Publishing companies produce kindergarten-level paper-and-pencil materials in reading, mathematics, and language arts. When these are acquired and distributed to kindergartens a not very subtle message is conveyed, and kindergarten teachers conclude that the administration and other members of the staff are expecting them "to do their part" in the effort to increase test scores.

Kindergarten Issues

These developments in the school system and the larger society have lead to several issues which are important for all children of kindergarten age but which may have particular relevance for atypical students.

Nature of the Program

The traditional, activity-oriented program in the kindergarten, with its emphasis on a schedule which includes a significant period of free-choice activities in a decentralized classroom, has all but disappeared in some situations. It is not unusual now to find a kindergarten where the children rarely move about the room freely, using the various centers of activity—the doll corner, the table-work area, the woodworking bench, and so forth. In some classrooms these areas exist but are used only by the children who have already completed directed activities to the satisfaction of the teacher.

In place of free-choice periods there are now small-groups and total-class lessons in handwriting, mathematics, and reading readiness or reading. Any child with difficulties in these academic subjects will likely have to spend additional time receiving instruction and engaging in skill practice.

The atypical child may fit into the traditional activity-oriented kindergarten rather well, doing art work, playing a game, or listening to a record with a friend. And, of course, this informal environment provides much in the way of possibilities for positive social experiences. When the kindergarten goes academic, however, the child who needs extra or different attention will often be receiving that while the others are sharing what appear to be more enjoyable sorts of activities.

The All-day Kindergarten

For a variety of reasons many school districts have either adopted full-day kindergarten schedules

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Day Care and the Exceptional Child

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In considering the resources available to handicapped children and their families, the day care center can and should be regarded as a primary support service. The day care center has something to offer both child and parent: for the child, experience in an environment created for children with normal peers; for the parent, a respite from the care of the child with the security that the child is benefitting from his experience.

Why the Day Care Center?

Statistics show that increasing numbers of mothers of young children are entering the labor force and need child care services. There is no reason to believe that parents of exceptional children are unaffected by this trend. If mothers of young normal children are faced with a dilemma in choosing child care services, the mothers of handicapped young children must deal with a more difficult problem.

It has often been recommended that in-home child care or family day care in the home of a caregiver is an optimal solution to the problem of finding day care for the exceptional child. There are certain advantages. In-home and family day care are less formal, more intimate arrangements. Combined with a therapeutic program, they may be ideal for the handicapped infant or toddler. However, as the handicapped child reaches the preschool years, his need for peer relationships and a more stimulating environment should enter into the decision of where to find care.

The day care center is a facility designed for young children. Day care centers are state licensed and regulated for health and safety. New York State regulations for day care centers establish a ceiling on group size and set adult-child ratios according to the age of the child. New York State regulations also require day care centers to have at least one staff person trained in early childhood education, and to provide supervision and training for the staff in meeting the needs of exceptional children at the center. Day care centers must also develop a program of activities which promote the child's emotional, cognitive and physical development. Although not a specific therapy, this program can be equally as helpful to the exceptional child, encouraging overall development and building on the child's strengths. Another benefit of the day care center is the opportunity the handicapped child will have to interact with her normal peers. Beyond the social and emotional benefits of companionship and membership in a group, there is the potential for learning appropriate behaviors from normal peer models, or through feedback from normal peers. In-home care and family day care homes rarely offer this supervised care, a developmental program and peer companionship.

The Day Care Program

Most day care centers offer a program that combines custodial care routines with developmentally appropriate activities. Children have opportunities for learning in both free play and structured lessons, and for socializing with other children and adults during play and during routine care times.

A typical care day begins before eight in the morning, when the first children start arriving. Early arrivers may have breakfast at the center, or begin to play in the classroom. By midmorning all the children are present, and a caregiver may take groups of children for a short lesson or structured activity. Later in the morning, a snack will be served, sometimes prepared by the children. Routine care times, like snack and meals, or dressing and toileting, are often used as opportunities for relaxed socializing and also to teach self-care skills. Snack may be followed by a large group activity, such as story-telling or music. By noon, the children are ready for lunch, and, after that, an afternoon nap which may be followed by another snack. The remainder of the day, until parents take the children home, is spent in indoor or outdoor play.

Mainstreaming Programs

Although some day care centers have one or two handicapped children enrolled, there have been few attempts at formal mainstreaming of handicapped children into day care centers. An exception to this is the Association for Retarded Children (ARC) of Western New York, which has established satellite programs in local day care centers. The satellite programs share the same facility with the day care program, and participate in some of the center's activities. Normal children and exceptional children are often integrated for free play and meal times. The ARC provides its' own teachers, as well as special materials, but the integrated setting allows for a variety of interactions among adults and children.

A Cautionary Note

Day care centers are a service which have not been frequently utilized by parents of handicapped children. Therefore, few centers are prepared to handle handicapped children, either by having a facility which can easily accommodate an exceptional population, or by having staff trained to work with handicapped children. As necessary a service as day care

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Some Perspectives on Assessment in Early Childhood

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Even before legislative mandates existed, the first task of a special educator was the assessment of the skills and abilities of each child in the class. Uneven development is to be expected as a result of a child's disability. Therefore, the teacher begins the instructional process by evaluating the child's strengths and weaknesses in order to establish appropriate objectives. Assessment is particularly difficult in the early years but those committeed to early intervention believe that young handicapped children can be validly assessed and that subsequent intervention will produce increments in such assessments. Those involved in this process, however, must be mindful of the assumptions made and factors to be considered in accurately assessing a young child's potential.

Universals and Differences

Children are observed to move through sequential tasks of early childhood with remarkable predictability. A child's first steps, for example, are taken at about one year of age or soon thereafter. In spite of cultural differences and various environmental stimuli, there is a remarkable similarity in the patterns of development of children throughout the world. All youngsters, including handicapped ones, are developmental learners in some aspect.

Differences also exist among individuals at any given age. Even in infancy pediatricians and mothers are aware of differences in babies' pace of growth. What this implies is that every child is an exceptional child. The term "exceptional" should always be used within the frame-work of an individual difference orientation to assessment and remediation. It also is helpful to think of such children in terms of a continuum of individual differences. One of the most difficult tasks facing the teacher of young children is that of determining which among the varying patterns of individual differences among children constitute a "problem." A 6-year old, for example, may reverse the direction of certain numbers and letters of the alphabet as he learns to copy them. Does such a pattern of behavior indicate the presence of a problem or handicap, or is it within the bounds of normalcy?

When Is A Problem Real?

When assessing young children, two factors should be kept in mind. The first is that if a problem exists, it is chronic and persists over time and situation. For example, if a child has an auditory memory disability, he will be unable to remember verbal directions, the names of objects, and the sequence of stories, as well as not to repeat the numbers on the digit span subtest of the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities. If the child is unable to perform on the ITPA but is capable of remembering auditory information in day-to-day situations, then this is a lack of validity of the test for that child, not evidence of a disability. If the inability to perform a specific skill is not consistent, there probably is no disability but rather a lack of opportunity to learn that particular task or a developmental lag in that specific ability. The teacher's role is to be certain that the child has an opportunity to learn the skill, then to determine if he has mastered all prerequisite skills.

A second important factor to consider is the degree of the problem. The difference between a child's performance and that expected of most children of the age must be severe enough to merit specific intervention. Teachers run the risk of failure in two possible directions. They may fail to identify a problem area, and as a result the child does not receive specific remedial experiences, and consequently, does not learn. On the other hand, they may falsely identify a problem that does not exist when more appropriate activities are provided. However, the failure to provide a young child with the needed remediation leads to the worst consequences because children do not outgrow learning problems. As the child grows older, continued failures can produce a geometric increase in problems in academic, social, and emotional development.

Types of Tests

There are basically two types of tests used to assess young children. The first type is standardized or norm-referenced. For educational purposes, standardized tests have limited value. They are instruments designed to be administered by a trained examiner and they provide a score that reflects the child's performance as compared to the performance of other children of the same chronological age. Standardized tests given during the early years of childhood are not very good predictors of the child's later performance partly because of young children's varied pace of growth.

Standardized tests do serve two purposes. First, since we live in such a test-enamored society, a score can be a pervasive piece of information. Test scores can be useful in obtaining service or funds, which frequently require evidence of the child's performance or status on some scale. Second, a good standardized test, such as the Stanford-Binet or Wechsler Pre-

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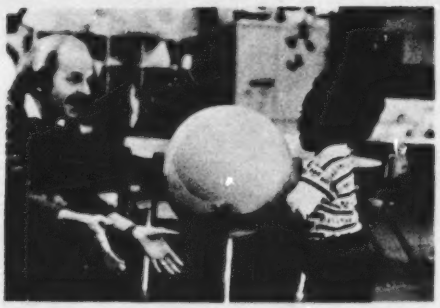

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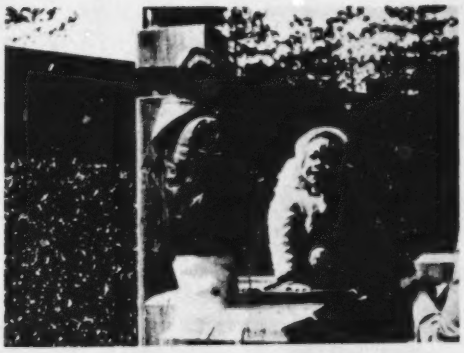

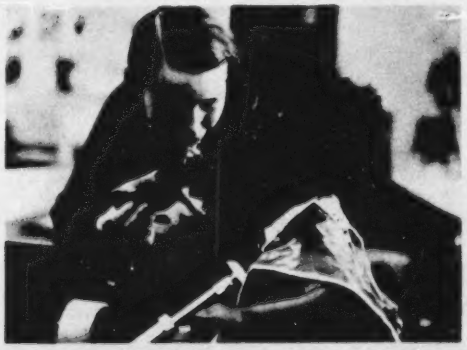

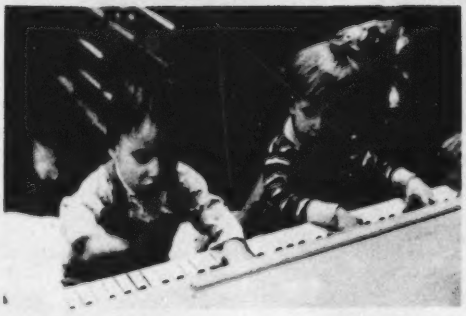

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Pictures provided by the Cantalician Center for Learning, Buffalo, and The Early Childhood Research, SUNY at Buffalo.

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Compiled by Christine Cataldo, Ed.D., Issue Editor

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Call For Award Nominations

The New York State Council for Exceptional Children Awards Committee is interested in receiving recommendations for recipients of the following special awards:

New York State Council For Exceptional Children Service Award

Candidates for the Service Award shall have demonstrated a long term committment toward furthering the work of the New York CEC. Their contributions to the organization shall have been of such a nature as to have distinguished them from others in the organization.

Friend of Special Education

Candidates for this award shall have proven through their actions a sincere desire to further the advancement of handicapped individuals.

Legislator of the Year

Candidates for this award shall have proven themselves to be advocates of special education. They shall have demonstrated through their legislative record an ongoing interest in and support of concerns of handicapped individuals.

Outstanding Retiree

Candidates shall have made an exceptional contribution during his/her career to the field of special education. Candidates shall have retired at the end of the 1980-1981 school year.

One award will be presented in each category. Awards will be presented at the State Convention being held November 13-15, 1981 at the Buffalo Waterfront Hilton, Buffalo, New York.

Nominations should include the award title for which the nomination is being made, candidate's name, address, telephone number, chapter number qualifications and rationale for his/her being nominated. Name, address and telephone number of the person making the nomination should also be included. Nominations should be detailed enough to give a clear description of the candidate.

Mail all nominations to:
Dr. Janet L. Jacobs
President, New York Federation
65 Covington Drive
Buffalo, New York 14220

Nominations must be postmarked no later than September 15, 1981.

Learning Disabilities—Observations Of An Itinerant Teacher

Dorothy W. Martyn, Ph.D.
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Manhattan Children's Treatment Center
New York

This informal report is the outcome of intensive work with academically troubled children. These remarks are not intended as a scientific treatise, and the observations may not apply to all children who are said to have learning disabilities; but it is my conviction that at least part of the following picture may be found wherever there are able children for whom school is simply not working.

The children with whom I worked were thought to be "perceptually handicapped." They had all been found to have "normal" intelligence, and some tested as very "bright." While the psychological reports showed considerable intellectual and emotional variation, and while each child demonstrated a unique style in his classroom disability, it would have been impossible not to see the striking parallels between the patterns of difficulty. In the following paragraphs, I wish to discuss some of the insights that became clear to me during the year's work.

A Question of Attitude

The primary "learning disability" for each of these children is a question of attitude. Whatever the original reasons for their failure to connect with the curriculum or the teacher—developmental unreadiness for first grade; some perceptual difficulty, such as poor visual or auditory memory or inadequate body and spatial awareness; climatic or other factors in the classroom or at home that were not conducive to learning—the great common denominator now is a matter of how the children *feel* about themselves and about school.

What stands out is this: they have lost the feeling that they can handle what is coming their way. They have experienced—all of them—a degree of failure and humiliation in the classroom that has taken an enormous toll of their self-esteem. They are burdened with a feeling of inadequacy, and with suppressed rage at whoever and whatever confirms that feeling. Whether most of them came to school in the first place with a damaged self-image, or whether the feelings of humiliation have arisen primarily from the classroom failure is not clear. What is clear is that *the pervasive sense of inadequency and the anger generated by the daily confirmation of that inadequacy now constitute the core of the "learning disability."*

As a result of this situation, we see children who carry such a heavy load of anxiety (the supressed rage) that they have little energy left for the classroom task. The anxiety is manifest in a number of ways: hyperactivity, short attention span, chronic fatigue, aggressive behavior, withdrawn behavior. One child masks his inadequacy by being the class clown, one feigns indifference, one annoys his neighbors by hitting and kicking (and is subsequently ostracized), one lies and steals, many simply can't sit still. One second-grader furiously writes wrong answers all through his math workbook. They are all brothers under the skin—they are angry, and it takes most of their psychic energy simply to handle the anger.

Muriel Beadle (1970) emphasizes that it is success itself that leads the child step by step forward in his intellectual endeavors. What I have seen is the converse: it is *failure* itself that causes these children to *retreat* step by step, away from the risk of further humiliation in academic tasks. Their learning disabilities are primarily self-protective devices they have developed to guard the remnants of their self-esteem. Actually, they have been busy "learning," but not what we have been teaching: they have been learning how to avoid pain by disengaging their minds, to some degree, from whatever tasks they associate with the classroom.

Since these children are not responding to the curriculum, we erroneously assume there is something "wrong" with the child, and we are presently applying massive professional effort to identify the "something wrong" in the child that will explain the gap between our teaching and his response, something that will explain the learning disabilities.

A Closer Look at Perceptual Handicaps

It would be wrong to explain most of these disabilities in terms of "perceptual handicaps." This diagnostic category, commonly applied to the children with whom I worked, suggested that their auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic, or other senses were not serving them adequately, and that they were thus unable to learn.

The discovery that there are differences in the way children are able to pick up stimuli is an important one. Every child must be provided, in his earliest experiences in the classroom, with whatever extra teaching is required to offset some developmental lag or differential endowment in his perceptual equipment. Here is where our resource people or special personnel—speech and hearing specialists, LD teachers (the terminology here is unfortunate), experts in perceptual training—are needed, making sure that body awareness, sense of direction, and auditory and visual memory are being developed to the utmost

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The Early Years

(Continued from Page 2)

is our goal, continued interdisciplinary communication may help us identify and resolve some major concerns. This issue of *The Forum* reflects that same spirit of cooperative effort on behalf of the very young. Each article examines issues and presents ideas and suggestions that derive from one discipline and reach into the next.

William Fowler describes some basic notions in early childhood education and explains how the elements of play, routine care and learning are tied to one another. Michael Lamb presents important recent perspectives on how parents serve as educational resources to children and schools. Alice Honig talks about the need for teachers to apply child development principles in working with special children. Alice Kozen and Susan Zippiroli present the natural citizen mode for integrating the handicapped child into the typical preschool setting. Judith Duchan describes strategies for working with children's language as communication.

Lori Geismar and Christine Cataldo present child, group, and parent-focused programs for infants and toddlers. David Pomerantz and Kathleen Gradel describe issues in combining functional and developmental approaches to educating severely handicapped young children. Margaret Rappaport describes the executive function of the family in preventing and managing childhood problems. Joseph Sparling emphasizes social growth as an integral part of curriculum planning and implementation. Richard Salzer presents recent trends in the kindergarten as they relate to the special child. Antonia Potenza describes the role of day care for young special children. Judy Bondurant talks about issues in assessment and evaluation in the early years.

Finally, a Bibliography is provided that contains references and other resources. These have been organized into seven topic areas to assist the reader in locating material relating to the articles in this issue and to their general areas of interest. The photographs of infants and children have been generously provided to *The FORUM* by the Cantalician Center for Learning, Buffalo, New York, and The Early Childhood Research Center, SUNY at Buffalo.

Elements of Early Care

(Continued from Page 4)

Summary

Thus, early childhood competencies and information are acquired through play, care and adult-child transactions. The elements described are present in a variety of types of programs for infants and young children. Deliberate, formal teaching is only a part of the wider spectrum of program experiences that contribute to development and learning in the young child.

Mothers and Fathers

(Continued from Page 5)

development indirectly by way of their influence on their wives. Husbands who are supportive of their wives enhance the quality of mother-child relationships and thus facilitate the children's healthy development. Primary caretaking mothers are especially likely to need support when they have special children, and thus fathers may be particularly important in these circumstances. Because of this, practitioners must make every effort to integrate fathers into program design and implementation so they do not come to feel excluded.

Summary

After years of experience, we know that it is not easy to design and implement interventions for special children. However, we also know that the changes of success are substantially greater if we include parents in both design and implementation, thus taking advantage of the special child's richest, most salient, and most special resources.

The Handicapped Child

(Continued from Page 7)

each citizen (child) has equal participatory rights. It is a legitimate setting for both handicapped and non-handicapped children because the same rules and regulations apply for everyone. The integrated setting socially validates handicapped childrens' presence. From the onset, all children share the same common space. There is a natural sense that this is the way it's supposed to be, therefore, it's right that it is this way.

Summary

In conclusion, we feel that the integrated model is a viable alternative to mainstreaming at the preschool level. In the absence of any clear-cut evidence to support either model the rationale for integration offers the richest and most realistic attitude toward handicapped children. This can only enhance the early and formative educational experiences of all children.

In Fancy

(Continued from Page 9)

Eclecticism in Programs

All three approaches to the early education and care of infants serve as special beginnings for the young child. The infant curriculum model with its focus on skill development and planned learning experiences provides us with some valuable activity tools. The less structured group care approach contributes the power of daily experiences such as play, personal interaction and care routines as vehicles of learning and growth. The parent oriented model provides a needed focus on the family as a significant educational force. It is important to note that if we expect to enhance the total development of infants and toddlers in educational settings we need to borrow the best of what is available.

Summary

All babies need and have the right to love and nurturance. Education has an unwritten mandate to protect its youngest learners from both the arrogance of strictly prescribed experiences and the wastefulness of aimless programming. To insure a good beginning to their educational lives, infants and toddlers need special attention to learning, but also to their growth as persons. Their very early start towards the achievement of their potential requires our best in sensitive and humanistic programming, whatever model of learning we select.

Curricular Planning

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Jenny's opportunities to develop meaningful competence were restricted. Instruction could have been integrated into the school day so that it was natural and more generalizeable—i.e., "Get your snack," and "Throw your napkin away."

The Developmental-Functional Dilemma

What solutions to the developmental-functional dilemma do we have for education of severely handicapped youngsters? First, it is obvious that we must decide on the content of instruction only after we have taken a close look at the settings in which the child lives, plays, and goes to school. As a product of this inventory, the teacher can then generate a list of skills that the child is expected to demonstrate. This list will naturally develop from the input of significant people in the child's life—in particular, his parents. From these same individuals, we should also be able to determine ways in which the child participates in community settings such as grocery stores, restaurants, neighbors' homes, etc.

A more difficult extension of this decision-making involves looking at the future. It is impossible to estimate the specific jobs or living arrangements that will be appropriate for these youngsters. However, we do have the competent adult as a standard. In order to somehow measure the longitudinal impact of skills we are teaching, we have to ask whether they are necessary for adult functioning. The criterion against which a skill is judged will be the extent to which we can best estimate its integration into important life skills for adults.

Summary

The teacher who uses a functional approach must exercise competence in instructional decision-making that is not evident among educators who blindly follow prescribed sequences. Success in designing appropriate programs for young severely handicapped students requires at least the following:

1. Interfacing with critical non-school environments, both for information-gathering and instruction;
2. Setting priorities among possible teachable goals based on their current utility as well as their importance in being integrated in the adult repertoire; and
3. Selecting instructional procedures that minimize artificiality and maximize generalizability of the skills being taught.

There are few programs in which this functional approach to early childhood special education is operating. The responsibility to develop such model classrooms belongs equally to teachers, school administrators, and teacher preparation programs.

Prevention of Problems

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in modern society.

Second, parents should create environments of "family feeling"; networks of people for support and sharing to reduce the sense of fragmentation and isolation which characterizes American life. These people-to-people networks-an extended family of sorts-are places where family and parenting issues will come alive in an atmosphere of shared experiences. This is, after all, what the multi-generational extended family used to provide in another era.

Third, families must foster the fullest appreciation for children's growth and development in a rapidly changing and challenging world. They must encourage children's potential to achieve a worthwhile future. Childhood is a complete experience for children, not merely a stage to be passed through on the way to becoming an adult. Children must be approached in a new way that leads to the opportunity for them to develop the full range of competency and self-expression. They must be guided to invent meaningful and productive lives. Families must facilitate and nourish a child's growth; they must consider the elegance of childhood in the life cycle.

Last, children must be assured lives that are physically and emotionally healthy. Families must work to structure social institutions so that the foundation on which survival, learning, and happiness depend are present for all children to use as springboards to development. As the designers and organizers of children's environments, as authorities and consultants to children's experiences, families must make a maximum effort on behalf of children.

Curriculum for the Very Young

(Continued from Page 12)

allowing her to select out of two boxes that are brought to her is another approach.

Summary

These and other social activities are not meant to be self-consciously separated from other aspects of the curriculum. In many cases, both a social and a cognitive goal can be accomplished at the same time. Yet, most of us will neglect the social goals unless we exert a conscious effort to bring them up to a higher level in our own awareness and make some special plan for increasing these social events in the child's day. For some teachers, a general curriculum resource may aid in such planning.

Kindergarten Issues

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or are considering abandonment of the half-day format. Parents often favor all-day classes because that is more convenient for them or because they genuinely believe that their youngster needs such an experience. Kindergarten teachers favoring the change say that an all-day pattern permits them to plan a comprehensive program which includes the usual creative, self-selected experiences as well as the directed pre-academic lessons.

On the other hand, there are teachers and parents who object to the all-day schedule. Some do so on the grounds that children of age five cannot or should not be conforming to the requirements of a long school day. Others argue that a full-day schedule robs youngsters of some of their childhood by depriving them of needed play time, both in and out of the classroom.

No doubt children can survive full-day kindergartens and some will thrive in them. Some rural schools have always had all-day classes and many disadvantaged children have attended such programs in urban areas for some time. But the question remains as to whether or not a more flexible approach could be adopted, with families being given the opportunity to choose the length of day for a particular child. Such an option might be especially important in the case of an atypical student.

Place of Specialist Teachers

While traditional early childhood education beliefs have stressed that the kindergarten should be self-contained, with the classroom teacher presenting the entire program, in many situations today kindergarten children have regular experiences with music, art, physical education teachers, and librarians. Reasons for these procedures include the desire to provide students with high-quality learning experiences; they also protect teachers' jobs and provide for contractually mandated duty free periods for teachers.

Except for situations in which specialized training is provided for the handicapped youngster, it would appear that children with special needs would be much better off in the self-contained setting than in one where there were non-academic or physical theraphy specialist teachers. A kindergarten teacher who knows the child well is much more likely to be able to guarantee a positive experience than is someone who may be only marginally aware of the potential for problems to arise, especially when she has consulting support services available.

Diagnosis and Screening in the Kindergarten

Largely through the efforts of the special education lobby, states such as New York have begun to use kindergarten entrance as a point at which to review youngsters for developmental status and evaluate those who diverge widely from the norms. (And not only negative divergence—suspected gifted New York kindergarteners are also to be reported to the superintendent of schools.)

While there are reasons to support this procedure as well as to oppose it, the fact remains that any kind of emphasis on children's deficiencies will likely influence curriculum and teaching. Indeed, some school districts now use a kindergarten instructional program based on a deficit model. And, once such innovations are made, the tendency is for these procedures to be used with all children, not just the atypical. It seems likely that the introduction of students with overt problems into the classroom will lead to greater stress on diagnostic-prescriptive-testing sorts of instruction. Perhaps in some settings the presence of children with special needs will be used as a rationale for adopting such an approach, with parents of typical children raising objections.

In stressing what is similar about all children it might be argued that even handicapped should have their strengths and abilities emphasized rather than their deficits. Bead-stringing for example can be a rather enjoyable cognitive creative—social experience, rather than one which involves criterion levels, pretesting, task analysis, individualized instruction, and the usual trappings of the behaviorist approach.

Summary

These issues in kindergarten education highlight recent trends that educators can discuss. Kindergarten might best serve as a comfortable transition into the elementary grades at the same time that it adds to overall development and learning.

Day Care

(Continued from Page 14)

is, most centers struggle to provide quality care for normal children. But the potential of day care to provide a valuable service for handicapped children and their families is there, and programs like those sponsored by the ARC prove it. Day care can, and should be, a support for the exceptional child and his family.

Some Perspectives

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school and Primary Scale of intelligence, when administered by an experienced examiner, can provide useful information about the child.

For instructional purposes the second type of test, the informal criterion-referenced test, is considered to be far more valuable to the teacher. Criterion-referenced testing has been used during the last ten years to an increasing degree. Criterion-referenced tests compare the child's performance against mastery of a skill rather than comparing his performance to that of his peers. The child's entry into an instructional program is made at that point where she does not demonstrate mastery but indicates her first need for instruction in a given skill area or domain. The test, in effect becomes the task. Task analysis, or the breaking down of a given skill into its component parts, complements criterion-referenced testing. In fact, we now speak of criterion-referenced programs, indicating that they form a link between testing and instruction.

Criterion-referenced testing also has its weaknesses. There are problems with the validity of the items as representative of all the skills related to a given trait, the accuracy of the sequencing of the related skills, and the discreteness of the skills and abilities themselves. For example, it has been assumed that the ability to recite back a series of digits is representative of short-term memory, or that the prerequisite skills for cutting with scissors includds development of pincer grasp and coordination of the hand and eye movement. These tests assume that such traits as short-term memory and eye-motor coordination can be separated from the child's total functioning and are amenable to measurement but this may not be the case. In addition, it is not clear whether resulting profiles or check lists, which are the usual format for criterion-referenced tests, include all of the critical elements and skills for learning. These tests have nonetheless contributed toward making assessment more relevant to instruction and have aided the teacher in identifying appropriate instructional objectives for children.

Summary

Through observation and evaluation of the child's strengths and weaknesses, the teacher attempts to determine whether or not the child has a learning problem or has not reached a level of maturity in specific skills. Careful noting of the child's abilities serves to reduce redundancy in formal testing and to co-ordinate or refute the findings of such assessment. Therefore, emphasis also needs to be placed on the teacher's observational skills and informal diagnosis as a component of assessment.

When using measuring instruments for use with preschoolers, it must be remembered that standardized and criterion-referenced tests allow persons to label children which then influences expectations and perceptions. Professionals need to be less concerned with attaching a score or age equivalent or identifying an appropriate label for the child and instead attempt to carefully and sensitively focus on what each child is communicating about herself through her words and actions. A good teacher of young children is first of all a good listener and observer. The diagnostic question is not what the child has but what the child is able to do so. When presenting assessment results to parents or other professionals, always emphasize the child's skills and abilities. In this way, we may accomplish our purpose as special educators—to help each child develop to his full potential.

Learning Disabilities

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before formal reading instruction is undertaken. The importance of perceptual development as a *preventive* measure is easily under estimated.

However, when this preventive programming is lacking and the child is not provided with the appropriate tasks, at the appropriate rate, with adequate teaching, in an atmosphere conducive to his self-esteem, it is neither accurate nor helpful to dub him "perceptually handicapped," and attempt to deal with his problem as though his "pathology" were the cause of the academic disability. These children were "handicapped" or "disabled" only in relation to our system: we have not yet been able to provide for their developmental needs in such a way as to ensure them the daily success that is the necessary fuel for their intellectual engines. Without this fuel, the engine will stop working; and we will indeed get a "learning disability" as a result—but it is not a perceptual handicap that produced it. What produced it is a "teaching disability," that is, an educational system that is not yet equipped, in staffing and programming, to prevent the crippling effects of failure and, conversely, to supply the necessary fuel of daily success.

Further, once a child has gone past the first grade and is failing, perceptual training is, in my opinion, no longer the central task, even though a poor auditory or visual memory may have triggered the initial humiliation. The task is now centered on making reparations to his feelings about himself by offering him a relationship in which he can genuinely feel his worth, and by making every imaginative attempt, finding ways around and under the hurt, to help him achieve competence in the skills he lacks. Competence and self-esteem are so related that whatever will help one will help the other.

From Rage to Reading

Among the children under discussion, the most vivid example of how initial perceptual difficulty, subsequent humiliation, and effective remediation are related is seen in the case of a bright third-grader who simply could not read. At first, no doubt, the problem had to do with a poor visual memory that failed him in the first grade when it came to sight recognition of simple words. There followed an increasing sense of inadequacy and humiliation, daily confirmation of the inadequacy, and mounting anxiety

(anger) at the confirmation. At one time, the most urgent task for this child may well have been perceptual training; at third grade, however, the task was to provide him with an effective relationship in which he could once again experience his adequacy, and in that relationship to offer him an alternative approach to reading—a heavily phonetic approach. As the child began to feel genuine success and the beginnings of reading competence, he also began to experience some relief from the anxiety, which in turn left him a modicum of psychic energy with which he could face his classroom tasks.

Thus, the question of attitude is fully as significant as the cognitive components, and in the remedial situation probably more so. The essence of the task is to relate effectively to the child (as well as to the teacher and the other professional staff) with authentic respect, acceptance, warmth. Whatever imaginative interventions and curricular innovations we design, the courage to learn, especially for a child who has been hurt, will come primarily out of the security he finds in a relationship with an adult he can trust.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Dr. Rothman:

Thank you for your "telling it like it is" article in the Spring issue of *The FORUM* on Mainstreaming.

We desperately need more thoughtful analyses like yours, so that parents are not deluded into thinking that mainstreamng will be the all-embracing panacea for their children's educational and emotional problems.

Unfortunately the name of the game is money as you so aptly emphasized.

Hopefully, the handicapped children who require special education won't turn out to be the hapless pawns in this current phase of semantic nonsense that has beset some members of the educational community.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Spina (0248)
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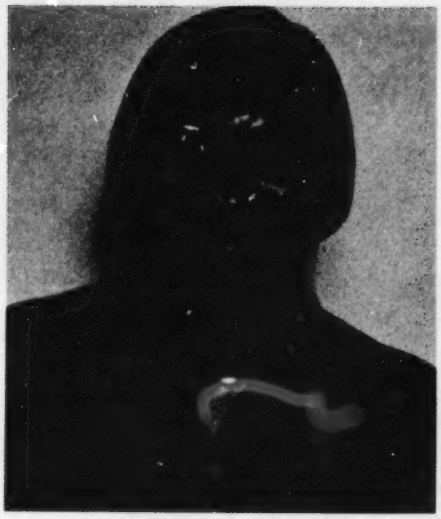

Message From The President

As my term as CEC New York State Federation President draws to a close I pause in reflection of the past year. Most Outstanding in my recollections are the images of the numerous hard working CEC members with whom I have met across the state. Coming from diverse locations, these energetic, dedicated people are all faced with common problems in their attempt to improve conditions for the handincapped.

The end of my term comes at a time when we in special education are at a psychological low ebb caused by the proposed federal budget cuts and the debilitating effects which they will certainly have upon services to handicapped students. If seems odd that during the International Year of the Disabled we should be dealt with such a staggering blow. At the same time that an entire year is set aside to highlight the problems of disabled individuals and to focus on their achievements, the threat of a reduction in funds to special education looms large.

It is my fear that due to this financial crisis, our energies will become so directed toward maintaining the status quo that we will have little fervor left with which to strengthen existing programs. We must guard against becoming so reactive in our approach to this crisis, rather than active, that we lose sight of being innovative.

I urge local CEC chapters to recongize in their programming the importance of our political responsibility but to insure that it does not become our sole focus.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have served the New York State CEC membership this past year as President. The position served as a vehicle for experiences which have left very positive impressions on my life. I encourage everyone to take a more active role in the organization so that they too may share in these most rewarding experiences. Through active involvement you gain far more than you give.

The Selected Writings of William M. Cruickshank

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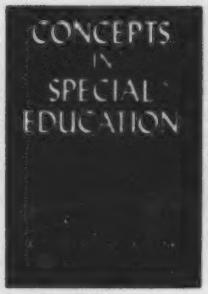

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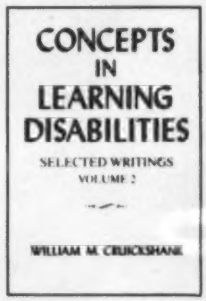

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Director
Special Education & Instructional Services
BOCES—Sole Supervisory District
St. Lawrence—Lewis Counties

CEC—Currently—The Political Action Network Coordinator; NYSCEC Advisory Board, 3 yrs.; PAN Coordinator, 3 yrs.; CEC member, 10 yrs.

STATEMENT

The mission of the Council for Exceptional Children has traditionally been that of one of advocation for the needs of handicapped individuals within our society. At this point in time our previous efforts to secure the rights of handicapped individuals are seriously being challenged.

It is my belief that only strong and vigorous leadership with a commitment to fully inform the membership can effectively counteract this trend within our state and nation. With experience as a PAN Coordinator I believe I have developed the necessary contacts and relationships necessary to assist the Council in sustaining the many won rights of handicapped individuals.

GEORGE SINGFIELD
Director
Special Services Program
Samuel Field Y.M. & Y.W. H.A.
Little Neck, New York

CEC—Currently—Regional Representative, Long Island, 3 yrs.; Assistant Editor, Literature Review, *The Forum*, 4 yrs.; NYSCEC Advisory Board, 6 yrs.; Regional Representative, Queens 2 yrs. Founded new Queens CEC Chapter.

STATEMENT

During my long association with the New York State Federation of Chapters of the Council for Exceptional Children, I have worked at the grassroots chapter level, Chapter #71, Long Island. I was an early worker and contributor to *The Forum* and held various offices before later becoming Long Island, and then Queens, Regional Representative. I have also been a participant and principal presenter at State Federation Conferences, as well as at five National Conferences and the International CEC Conferences in Stirling, Scotland.

My work with handicapped persons at varied educational levels, in the public and private sector, is long-standing. In addition, the experience I have gained as an administrator, program developer and staff developer will enable me to serve in varied ways.

I seek the position of Vice-President because, having been afforded the opportunity to learn and serve at the various levels, and the many ways partially indicated above: I feel there is much skill and information I can give and share as a member of the Executive Committee and leadership of the New York State Federation.

I also recognize that CEC, as a professional body and advocate for handicapped persons, is at a crossroads today. In this decade of the 80's, we are not only going to be greatly challenged as professionals, line workers and organizationally; but our adroitness as creative planners and innovators for change—significant change—is going to be tested legislatively, economically, philosophically, technologically, as well, through qualitative professional accountability.

I wish to be an integral part of this change, as it affects us here in New York State. I ask for your support in allowing me this privilege and opportunity. I wish to thank all who will lend me their support.

TREASURER
JUDITH BONDURANT, PH.D.
Exceptional Children Education
State University of College at Buffalo
Buffalo, New York

CEC—Currently—State CEC Treasurer; involvement at the local level since 1973; Editorial Advisory Board of *The Forum*, 1980; Treasurer, NYS Federation 1980-81; Local Arrangements Chairperson, NYS Convention 1981; Treasurer, Chapter #402, 1978-80; Faculty Advisor, Buffalo State Student Council for Exceptional Children, 1978-81; Chairperson, Nominations Committee Chapter #402, 1977-78.

STATEMENT

During the past year I had the privilege of being appointed to serve the remainder of Dr. Stanley Johnson's term as Treasurer. I am honored to be nominated to continue this position. I know that I can continue to be of service to our organization on the State level and welcome this opportunity.

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES
BUFFALO REGION

SALLY QUIMBY
Resource Room Teacher
BOCES II, Erie County

STATEMENT

I am motivated to run for the position of Regional

Representative, Buffalo Region, New York State Council for Exceptional Children, by a deep and sincere interest in this organization. New York State CEC has been and is presently an "exceptional" organization.

If elected I will foster the many positive practices already established, for example:

(1) Publication of the Forum
(2) Sponsorship of an annual state conference

In the future I would work toward the following goals:

(1) increase our membership
(2) increase the "grassroots" participation
(3) increase the communication between the National and State CEC organization.
(4) Provide additional support and encouragement to our student members. (They have done an outstanding job during 1980-81)

I would appreciate your support.

CEC—Currently—Active member CEC Chapter #402; NYS DCLD Representative to NYS CEC Advisory Board; Charter President NYS DCLD; Member, National DCLD Executive Board; Participant in State and National CEC conferences.

ALBANY REGION

DEBORAH C. MAY, ED.D.
Assistant Professor
Special Education Program
Department of Educational Psychology & Statistics
State University of New York at Albany
Albany, New York

STATEMENT

During this time of anticipated budget cuts, it is crucial for professionals, paraprofessionals, and parents to work together to insure the future quality of special education. In my faculty position at SUNY, I am in contact with both faculty and students at Albany area colleges. I also supervise in State, private, and public school programs for exceptional children and am able to see and talk with program staff and parents about their concerns.

I will be able to contribute to the N.Y. State CEC as regional representative continuous contact with these people in the Albany area, as well as with the State offices and legislature.

NEW YORK REGION #1

BERNARD KOSBERG
Director of Education
Andrus Children's Home
Julia Dyckman Andrus Memorial, Inc.
Yonkers, New York &
Adjunct Instructor
Manhattan College, Graduate School of Education

CEC—Currently—Assistant Editor (with wife)—TEACHER/CLASSROOM CONCERNS, *The Forum,* President, Westchester CEC Chapter 615.

STATEMENT

As a Regional Representative, New York Region #1, I plan to support each of the local chapters within my region in

— Achieving chapter goals
— Creating new chapters
— Developing a public awareness and acceptance of exceptional children
— Providing services to children
— Professional growth, fellowship, and training
— Recruitment to the profession
— Program presentation
— Fund raising
— Governmental involvement.

Since the field of special education has increased enormously over the past five years, I feel it is inherent upon the Executive Board of the New York State Council for Exceptional Children to provide leadership in establishing the structures necessary for professional success. I will do my best to help in the creation and fortification of these foundations.

LONG ISLAND REGION

LOIS M. SMITH
Counselor for Exceptional Children
Jericho Junior-Senior High School
Jericho, New York

CEC—Currently—Active member of CEC Federation Chapter #248; participant in State and National CEC Conventions, Contributor to *The Forum.*

STATEMENT

In seeking the position as Long Island representative, I will help to articulate and to communicate the needs of the Council for Exceptional Children and the youngsters it serves.

I will keep in constant contact with each of the Long Island chapters, thus providing for communication among them. To strengthen each chapter, I will actively seek new members.

At a time when fiscal pressures threaten our programs, I will work with the chapter leaders to keep our legislators apprised of our continual concerns for exceptional children.

Finally, with the support of each of you, I will help Long Island to maintain its leadership position with the New York Federation.

ROCHESTER REGION
No nomination

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Hidden Handicapped by Dr. Judith Ehre, Kranes, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1980

There exists in ever-increasing numbers a segment of our school population, though not immediately recognizable as being handicapped, manifest wide gaps in their development that is thought to be neurological in origin. Though these youngsters usually have nearly normal IQs, they may actually function on a retarded level. Additionally, though they are not diagnosed as emotionally disturbed, such children generally develop severe emotional problems; as well as motor and perceptual difficulties, which affects their coordination and ability to adequately process information.

In past years, these students were usually relegated to "ungraded" classes, slow learner tracks, CRMD classes or vocational programs. Upon graduation from school, they were inevitably doomed to dead-end, entry level jobs, with few opportunities to improve their skills, enlarge upon their potential, or realize any prospects for a more financially rewarding future.

With the increased interest in and attention to the educational and social needs of learning disabled youth, during the past ten years, such students have been increasingly identified and subsequently placed in special classes that are taught by specially trained teachers. As assessment and prescriptive techniques have become more sophisticated, there is a greater emphasis on individualized instruction, the use of non-traditional teaching methods, and the sharing of information with mainstream instructors, in order to "provide more effective education in the least restrictive environment." Today, even with modifications in the curriculum, establishment of varied support systems to handle emotional crises, and the focus on more specific career needs, the school-age marginal learning disabled youngster is still not very well prepared to face the demands of the real world. The failure that these students tend to confront outside the educational system, simply reinforces a lifetime of negative self-concept and poor self-esteem.

Dr. Judith Kranes (who indicates she was a "slow learner" herself) has written in her book *The Hidden Handicapped,* about her experiences as the founder of the *Para-Educator Center for Young Adults at New York University.* The center is a two year program for training what she labels the "marginally learning disabled," (those persons with an IQ between 75-95) to be teacher aids in nursery school, day care center and kindergarten programs.

During the mid-sixties, Dr. Kranes was appalled by the attitude of the educational community toward these MLD students, who were considered retarded or lazy. She was also sympathetic to the seeming desperateness of the parents of such children, who could only watch as their children experienced failure and frustration in their academic and vocational lives. Dr. Kranes used these concerns to motivate her to develop a graduate program that would train such slow learners for a profession. The need for such a program was based on her observation that these "shadow children" were neither suitable for placement in workshops, where the training in more basic manipulative and mechanical skills seemed less challenging and limiting for youngsters who seemed able to move in more challenging and possibly academic settings.

The Para-Educator Center program is both experiential and structured, based on a field placement with a cooperating teacher and classroom practical application work. What started in Dr. Kranes' home with two students, developed into a demonstration center which has become a model for similar programs throughout the United States.

Dr. Kranes attributes the success of the program to stringent requirements in the PEC training—e.g., appropriate grooming, signing of daily attendance sheets and relating to a variety of different individuals in the process of their daily experience (teachers, assistants, children, janitors, kitchen staff, etc.). In addition, and of greater significance, from an educational perspective, these marginally learning disabled students are helped to develop the kinds of skills they missed during their early developmental years. For example, through assisting and observing during their field work placement, the seemingly simply exercises in problems dealing with concepts of quantity, size, sequence, and relative comparison, helps in their being able to more successfully fill in some of the gaps in their own cognitive habilitation. Dr. Kranes seems to disagree with behaviorists and some developmentalists who believe that if the child has not had the fullest educational stimulation by the time they are toddlers, he or she will be lost to some of the prime educational opportunities, from that point on.

To counter this type thinking, Dr. Kranes discussed the point that rather than use "watered down texts," the PEC utilizes sequentially processed subject matter to help students fill in gaps in comprehension.

Since a major learning problem for the MLD student is his pronounced inability to cope with abstract problem-solving (unless it is connected to the concrete), the program is built around the field work experience; thus enabling the student to translate propositions, theories and methodologies into real life concretized situations.

Dr. Kranes also indicates in the book that 70% of PEC graduates have succeeded in acquiring gainful, employment as teacher aides, often in the very same schools where they did their field work. Those who do not actually become teacher aides are described as gaining significant levels of confidence and show marked improvement in their ability to relate to others and follow more than routine directions.

This reviewer believes, as Dr. Kranes has indicated, that this PEC program can serve as a model for secondary school programs in special education. Perhaps more educators, vocational specialists and clinicians should give more exposure to some of the

Kranes/PEC ideas and methodology. Some of this philosophy is significant because by the time the students enter high school, a significant level of their hyperactive behavior that has interfered with learning, is either markedly decreased or very often much more manageable. What often emerges afterwards is an immature adolescent with wide gaps in intellectual processing, deficits in reading, writing skills, problems with too much abstraction and poor inter-personal skills. If, as Dr. Kranes suggests, the majority of students in the PEC program benefit intellectually and socially from the program, then the program itself may be a key to successfully remediating some of those deficits that years of tutoring and special education programs often cannot do fully, as they now exist.

Though not specifically stated, it seems that some of the statements Dr. Kranes and the Para-Educator Center is also making are; that there are creative alternatives; let us not become so traditionally locked into ways of dealing with people to the extent that we build in some of our failure.

This book and program should become known to those who develop career education curricula and programs. Parent organizations that seek alternatives for parents might also look toward this productive effort by Dr. Kranes. Also, one might think about beginning to build in some of this type of overview, as we develop pre-school and early level programs involving youngsters, staff and parents.

Though I believe that Dr. Kranes should have elaborated on the approaches that were found to be most effective in enhancing the PEC's cognitive development, I strongly believe in the validity (and need) for the PEC program for the special population it serves, and the potential success that similar programs could have on secondary school levels.

Ms. Marilyn Buchman is a resident of Jericho, Long Island, and Resource Room Teacher, Half Hollow Hills East, Dix Hills, Long Island.

Professional News

Due to a recent tax ruling, many publishers are discontinuing books they could previously warehouse and write off on their taxes. The recent ruling voids that practice. Dr. Ernest Siegel's book *Help For the Lonely Child,* which was one of our recent reviews, has been discontinued by his publisher. Persons who may be interested in purchasing copies of *Help For the Lonely Child,* may do so by contacting Dr. Siegel at, 14-16 Waters Edge Drive, Bayside, N.Y. 11360. Price $7.50; $6.00 for two or more copies.

The State University College at Buffalo's Exceptional Children Education Department has openings for full-time students in its Master's program for educators of the severely handicapped. The Program is field-based, involving both employed teachers of the severely handicapped and traditional full-time students. Full-time Master's candidates participate in practica in model classrooms located in residential, public school, and private agency settings in the metropolitan Buffalo area. Employed participants receive on-site training in their classrooms. A limited number of graduate assistantships are available. The program runs from September through August. For information, please contact: Kathleen Gradel or David Pomerantz, Exceptional Children Education Department, Ketchum Hall 101, State University College at Buffalo, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14222.

Long Island Regional News

Much has been happening on Long Island. On April 9, 1981 the Project Team, Chapter #71 of CEC of Nassau County and SETRC of Nassau BOCES, sponsored The Administrators Invitational Conference on: *Mainstreaming in the 80's: An Administrative Dilemma.* The keynote speaker was Dr. Maynard Reynolds, a long time advocate for mainstreaming. The conference was held at C.W. Post Center, Greenvale, L.I.

Also, on May 9, 1981 the Adelphi University Special Education Programs, along with SETRC of Nassau BOCES and Chapter #71 of CEC Nassau, presented an all-day conference on: *Career and Vocational Education for Handicapped Students,* which emphasized the cooperative efforts between occupational, vocational and special education. The conference was held at Adelphi University, Garden City, L.I. A cross-section of the voluntary, public and governmental sectors were involved.

Many professional colleagues, as well as students from Long Island, attended and presented at the International Conference in New York during April 12-17.

A reminder to chapters to report officers for 1981-82. Call me if I can be of assistance. My phone number is listed in *The Forum.*

Carol Skydell will be the next president of Chapter #71 Nassau County. Congratulations! Carol.

To all CEC members on Long Island, please become active, if you are not. If you are active, make a commitment to bring a colleague to each meeting next year.

We hope you will have an enjoyable and productive summer. *Would someone from Suffolk County Chapter #653 please contact me?*

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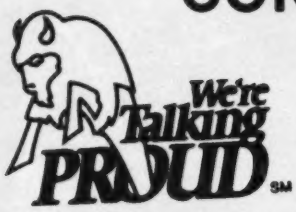

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